

DNR Accessibility Advisory Council Mtg.

Monday, November 5, 2007

Okemos, Michigan

Advisory Council Present:

- ☒ Sophie Baker, SOM, Dept of Civil Rights
- ☒ Cindy Burkhour, Access to Recreation Initiative
- ☐ Vendella Collins, SOM, Developmental Disabilities Council (MDCH)
- ☐ Jeff Coupie, Michigan Sports Unlimited
- ☒ Brigadier General Carol Ann Fausone, MI Department of Veterans Affairs
- ☐ Rodney Haneline, Leader Dogs for the Blind
- ☒ Aaron Harris, Safari Club
- ☒ Roberta McCall, SOM, Michigan Commission for the Blind (DLEG)
- ☐ Roger McCarville, Disabilities Today
- ☒ Scott Norris, SOM, Library of Michigan
- ☐ Lucia Rios, Disability Network – Lakeshore
- ☐ Scott Severn, MI Paralyzed Veterans of America
- ☒ Bill Sheffer, MI Assn of Recreation Vehicles & Campgrounds
- ☒ Jim Trinklein, MI Assn of Game Bird Breeders & Hunting Preserves
- ☒ Mark Velthouse, Outdoors Without Limits
- ☐ John Witzke, MI United Conservation Clubs
- ☐ Duncan Wyeth, SOM, Commission on Disability Concerns (DLEG)

DNR Present:

- ☒ Bonnie Arthur, Communications
- ☒ Vicki Brown, Wildlife
- ☐ Jordan Byelich, Parks & Rec
- ☐ Brenda Curtis, Forest Mineral and Fire Management
- ☐ Monica Day, Grants
- ☒ Jerry Harris, Human Resources
- ☐ Julee Hasbany, Communications
- ☒ Linda Hegstrom, Grants
- ☒ Sharon Lawrence-Taylor, Human Resources
- ☒ Dan Lord, Parks & Rec
- ☐ Sharlene McConneghy, Law Enforcement
- ☒ Erica Moore, Fisheries
- ☒ Tami Pattison, Fisheries
- ☒ William Pemble, OLAF
- ☒ Peggy Ruby, Law Enforcement
- ☒ Donna Slater, Human Resources
- ☐ Paul Stoddard, OLAF
- ☒ Deb Stolecki, Forest Mineral and Fire Management
- ☐ Bruce Watkins, OLAF
- ☒ Ken Wright, Human Resources

Guests Present:

Amy Spray, MUCC
Bill Milzarski, DLEG
Rick Briggs, Brain Injury Assoc
Tandy Biding, MDCH

Meeting called to order by Jerry Harris.

Changes to Agenda: None.

Minutes: Minutes from the September 24, 2007 meeting were accepted with no changes.

Scheduling Future Meetings: The next meeting is scheduled for January 14, 2008. The meeting schedule for 2008 is January 14, February 25, April 7, and June 2. Meetings again will be held at MHRVAC Okemos location. Jerry announced that Director Becky Humphries would be attending the February 25th meeting in lieu of a Chief presentation. Vicki Brown, Wildlife was introduced as Bill Rogers replacement. Roberta offered to give a visually impaired sensitivity presentation at a future meeting which Jerry accepted.

Rick Briggs, Traumatic Brain Injury Association: BG Carol Ann introduced Rick, who talked about the pheasant hunt and bass tournament recently held for veterans. He indicated that 11% of all soldiers coming home from combat are coming back with some level of brain injury, from coma to loss of sensory issues. The Brain Injury Association of Michigan is the largest in the US with 55 brain injury facilities. Most other states have only one or two facilities. Rick expressed an interest in serving on the Council. He also announced “Tip Ups for Troops” on Saturday, June 14, 2008 at Kensington Lake. Over 50 boaters will be available to get vets out on the water. Other Council members expressed interest in assisting with this event. Contact can be made with Rick at veterans@biami.org. Their website is at www.biami.org. All veterans are invited, not just those with brain injuries. Veterans take this opportunity to team up with another vet and can finally “open up” about their experience in combat.

BG Carol Ann indicated that she had a list of other activities available to veterans such as gardening, quilting, and cooking. Interested Council members can email her for a list.

Meet the DNR Chiefs; Land & Facilities Chief Dave Freed: Dave gave a presentation on the responsibilities of his division. First, they handle all real estate, buying, selling, and trespassing, on all land that the DNR manages. Second, facilities support including managers, account techs, secretaries, and general office assistants. Third, Design, Construction, and Customer Systems which includes the electronic hunting and fishing license, and parks campsite reservation system.

Council Ideas to Promote DNR Public Services: Erica updated the Council on changes that have been made on the internet regarding the AAC, Quick Links, Access to Recreation, and Adaptive Sports. A short paragraph was distributed for Council

members to use in their publications showing the link available. Changes were suggested. Erica will get those changes done and send to everyone.

Amy Spray from MUCC indicated that Michigan Out-of-Doors would be taking a disabled veteran out on opening day of hunting season and would be filming the day. Jerry asked that Amy forward to him via email further details to be shared with the Council.

Cindy talked about 211 connect in Midland County. BG Carol Ann also wrote an article in her newsletter regarding the Council. Both members will be forwarding info to Erica to be shared with the Council.

Roberta told the Council about a state professional organization she belongs to that works with children and adults with impairments in Michigan. Their State conference will be held in April and she is working with Bonnie Arthur who will also share details with the Council.

BG Carol Ann requested a future events calendar to be posted on the Accessibility webpage. Bill Milzarski indicated that the Michigan Statewide Independent Living Council (www.misilc.org) already puts out a newsletter listing all upcoming events for disabled. Rick Briggs suggested a link directly to veterans needs.

Tami discussed information from Roger McCarville regarding filming at the Brain Injury Conference. He has extended an invitation to all Council members to contact him regarding filming at their events.

Jerry suggested that a media committee be formed and asked for volunteers. Bill Sheffer and Rick Briggs will assist Bonnie and Erica who will be co-sponsors.

Updates: Linda Hegstrom updated the Council on the SCORP report. About 280 comments were received with over half focused on mountain biking and the North Country Trail. The comment period has closed and Dr. Chuck Nelson will be revising the plan, and submitting it to the NRC in December for approval.

Jerry updated the Council on the State Budget. The DNR is facing the “Perfect Storm”. General fund cuts, hunting/fishing fee package was not acted on, Parks improvements faltering, and forest revenues down. DNR is looking at ways to rebuild/refocus for 2008-2009. DNR must preserve the resources of the State for us and future generations.

Hunt from a Standing Vehicle Permit: Bill updated the Council on the subcommittee’s work. Several discussions were held and centered on two items. The definition of “unable to walk” and the definition of a “motorized vehicle”. The Council talked about the language used by the Secretary of State to determine handicap parking permits, and the controversy of a doctor determining disability status versus a DNR Conservation Officer. The committee is recommending that changes be kept relatively small but with a significant impact, and that we redefine motorized vehicle to personal assisted devices.

The subcommittee will be looking at the Secretary of State guidelines/standards and will present a recommendation at the January meeting for Council review.

Recreational Access Opportunities: Jerry talked about the Council beginning to look at a broader range of efforts. Additional subgroups could be added to work on other accessible ideas to get the public into our recreation areas. There was a discussion on the RSS system and empty campsites. The NRC has committed to looking at the crossbow permit process. Peggy indicated that Hunter Safety Classes have long been available in alternate formats. They can accommodate most requests.

Election of Officers: Jerry opened the floor for additional nominations to the ballot printed. No additions were made so Council was asked to vote for chair and vice chair to be in place for the January meeting. Mark Velthouse was chosen for a 2 year term as Chair, and Cindy Burkhour was chosen for a 2 year term as Vice Chair.

Additional Comments: Jerry again thanked Rick Briggs for his presentation and provided him with a Council member application packet. He also thanked Bill Sheffer for allowing the meetings to be held at the MI Association of Recreation Vehicles & Campgrounds Okemos location.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:05 pm.